

WORKING TOGETHER

A Strategic Plan For Continuing On Our Path To Greater Success In Education And Workforce Development

July 2011

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We present this plan because we believe in the human potential of the people of Mississippi. Every Mississippian is a "Person of Infinite Worth and Value". All citizens of Mississippi should have the opportunity to reach their maximum potential.

"Mississippi needs every citizen to be productive and self sufficient."

- Larry Otis
SWIB Chair

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The FORESIGHT To Achieve Greatness

The PASSION To Make It Happen

The INSIGHT To Plow New Ground

The DRIVE To Break Down Silos

The WILL To Be Accountable

The HEART To Build A New Culture

The CONVICTION To Secure The Buy-In

ABOUT THE STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (SWIB)



STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

The current SWIB was created by the Mississippi Comprehensive Workforce Training and Education Consolidation Act of 2004, by merging the WIA compliant SWIB with the State Workforce Development Council. A business-led organization, most of its representatives are regional business leaders and heads of public agencies involved with education, occupational skill training, and economic development.

Its primary mission is...

To Develop And Implement Strategies That Maximize Resources In Support Of Education And Occupational Skill Development To Improve Quality Of Life For All Mississippians.

PRIMARY STATE EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE PARTNERS















PRIMARY LOCAL EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE PARTNERS



























WIA: Delta, Mississippi Partnership, Southcentral Mississippi Works, Twin Districts

ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The goal of the **plan is simple**: to help our state **continue to attract, keep and grow good jobs**. Great strides have already been made. Over the past few years, the improvement of the education and skills of our workforce has contributed significantly to the economic readiness of the state in new and inspiring ways. Mississippi recently experienced its largest growth of high-skill, high-wage jobs, resulting in an increase in per capita income. Continuing on this trajectory, we will be able to increase our per capita income to or above the national average.

We have also **removed silos and built bridges** among various stakeholders in education and workforce development. Many of our education and workforce sectors are **sharing information** through the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, working together to **instill a culture** that supports data-driven decisions.

Despite Our Progress Toward Greatness, We Still Have A Lot Of Work To Do:

- Raising educational standards
- Increasing high school graduation rates
- Increasing college graduation rates
- Increasing coordination among educational entities in order to **follow progress** from PK through post graduate studies
- Increasing the use of **data to engage** in performance based management
- Strengthening the **role of education** in economic development and employment
- Publicizing educational and workforce **resources and successes** across public and political spheres

SWIB has identified five goals for the next 10 years to address current limitations. These goals are designed to increase our visibility as the epicenter for business development. The identification of the goals included working with the heads of state and local education and workforce agencies along with members of the business community.

- **GOAL 1:** *Drive* <u>economic development</u> by aligning and fully utilizing PK-12, Community Colleges, Public Universities, and the Workforce Training System
- **GOAL 2:** *Promote* Regional Sector Strategies balancing the goals of pursuing high-skill, high-growth jobs and advancing low-skill, low-wage workers
- **GOAL 3:** *Institutionalize* the <u>Statewide Longitudinal Data System</u> (SLDS)
- **GOAL 4:** *Market* the importance of <u>education and training</u>
- **GOAL 5:** Raise <u>awareness</u> of education and workforce issues and activities

Drive economic development by aligning and fully utilizing PK-12, Adult Education, Community Colleges, Public Universities, and the Workforce Training System

The competitiveness of our state depends on our ability to build a unified education and workforce system. By creating a seamless educational experience from early childhood into the workforce, we can help Mississippi realize its potential. SWIB proposes to achieve five major tasks toward this purpose:

- Create stackable credentials that allow high school seniors to earn college credit
 - Create formal commitments/agreements between local school districts and community colleges
 - Increase the number of students participating in dual enrollment programs
- Expand 2+2 Articulation Agreements between community colleges and universities
 - Identify curriculum gaps
 - Move students from community colleges to universities with minimal repetition
 - Allow community college graduates to transition to university without retaking courses
 - Coordinate with the Education Achievement Council
 - Minimize/eliminate remediation of incoming college students, particularly at the community college level

Promote a lifestyle of learning through multiple points of access, including online education

- Increase the role of universities to address state and regional issues
- Form sustainable partnerships with government and industry
- Build partnerships between instructors and industry experts
- Examine the strengths and weaknesses of similar initiatives in other states
- Develop programs within appropriate university colleges
- Expand available online educational programs
- Go beyond accreditation requirements

Establish a culture that nurtures a PK-20 educational experience that aligns student talents and achievement with career pathways

- Instill a culture that believes education is a long-term, not short-term, investment
- Engage in performance-based management

Coordinate partner services through collaborative initiatives designed around the economic health of the state.

- Identify opportunities for multi-district on-site educational programs offered jointly at various locations around the district/region/state
- Identify and share/barter/leverage resources such as facilities and personnel to expand the delivery of education and training offerings
- Utilize creative scheduling at community colleges in conjunction with high schools
- Schedule visits from industry professionals to high schools

Promote Regional Sector Strategies – Balancing the goals of pursuing high-skill, high growth jobs and advancing low-skill, low-wage workers

In the current economy, we compete on a global scale but continue to prepare workers locally. SWIB proposes to achieve four major tasks so that we can act locally to compete globally:

- Align resources and strategies to create, attract, expand, and retain companies that offer high-skill, high-wage jobs
 - Build consensus around key areas of collaboration
 - Identify incentives needed to encourage collaboration
 - Identify funding opportunities to support collaborative joint ventures
 - Increase the use of Career Readiness Certificates (CRC)
 - Identify existing capacity to conduct economic and market research
- Establish industry-oriented advisory councils to address unmet industry needs and potential that will guide curriculum development
 - Identify major demand occupations/industries and skill gaps
 - Establish workforce priorities to address employer occupational demand
 - Provide online employer assistance for recruiting employees
 - Arrange meetings between industry representatives and PK-12 to discuss potential industry-oriented or skills-based curricula
 - Design a three-to-five year plan to help PK-12 education better respond to industry needs

Host public forums with a SWIB presence to foster regional partnerships and promote networking

- Identify existing job fairs, company open houses, and other programs
- Create an online calendar to promote and catalogue existing programs
- Identify SWIB members to attend/participate in existing programs
- Promote existing programs actively
- Organize social and professional network events

• Encourage greater entrepreneurial activity to promote a "small-business" economy

- Create an inventory of existing entrepreneurial education and assistance efforts
- Develop a technical assistance and training approach for entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Establish an online support system
- Hold/sponsor events to educate existing entrepreneurs and connect them with potential entrepreneurs
- Identify sponsors interested in supporting increased entrepreneurial activity

Institutionalize the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)

Over the last 10 years, SWIB has been actively engaged in developing and implementing a data system that allows us to follow progress from early childhood to the workforce. To maximize the value of this tool, SWIB proposes the following tasks:

Secure funding to sustain the Statewide Longitudinal Data System

- Introduce legislation
- SB2371 was signed into law on March 14, 2011
- Investigate funding and allocation formulas for system maintenance and end-user training
- Identify and participate in grants and other funding opportunities
- Seek state and workforce partner funds
- Recommend proposed funding strategy to governor/legislature

Establish governance structure

- Make strategic and effective decisions regarding the use of the system
- Establish and maintain practices to ensure data quality and security

- Adopt information technology standards that meet or exceed industry standards
 - Examine promising/ best practices
- Produce a scorecard to monitor and answer key questions about system performance
 - Utilize common and consistent labor market outcome measures
 - Develop local definitions of success that are meaningful and relevant
 - Generate workforce data and related information about opportunities for educators, jobseekers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers
 - Distribute the scorecard widely

Market the importance of education and training

Higher education equals higher income and greater employability. In the next 10 years, jobs requiring two- and four-year college degrees will increase. SWIB proposes the following tasks to take full advantage of this trend:

- Create a Speakers Bureau with recognized experts, including SWIB members, on topics that matter to Mississippians
 - Identify experts
 - Provide training and education on important issues/topics for board members
 - Promote the involvement of SWIB members in regional and statewide events
 - Organize social and professional network events

- Engage parents and childcare professionals to change perceptions, attitudes, and expectations about early childhood learning
 - Develop marketing materials about advantages of higher education
 - Develop marketing materials about disadvantages associated with not pursuing higher education
- Demonstrate the value of education by showing the correlation between educational level and employment options
 - Develop marketing materials about advantages of advanced education and training
 - Use the SWIB website to present a public presence for any educational campaign
 - Develop and conduct training for WIA leaders on how to market the value of education and training
- Nurture parental engagement in educational decisions that impact workforce readiness

Raise awareness of education and workforce issues and activities

As we implement our plans, it is imperative that we let our leaders and constituents know where we are. SWIB proposes to achieve this by:

- Promoting the success of businesses that effectively used the workforce system through a variety of media, including social networking tools
 - Integrate the SWIB website into marketing efforts
 - Include successes as part of a SWIB annual report
 - Increase media coverage of success stories
- Creating an aggressive marketing campaign that generates awareness on education and workforce issues
 - Create SWIB subcommittee
 - Identify priorities for marketing

Expanding the role of SWIB representatives on boards and councils as advocates for education and workforce issues

- Brand and market the SWIB website
- Establish a 501(c)
- Integrate the SWIB website into marketing efforts
- Produce an annual report
- Enhance/increase media coverage of board successes

Developing a scorecard to determine regional progress

- Develop definitions of success
- Distribute the scorecard widely



For additional information regarding SWIB and its activities, please visit: www.swib.ms.gov



To provide feedback on this strategic plan, please complete the contact form at: www.swib.ms.gov/contact



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